

No police department can function effectively without the concerned assistance of responsible citizens. They are depending on you to call and tell them whenever you observe a suspicious persons or activity.

Call police immediately about all suspicious activity and do it yourself. Don't worry about "bothering" them. Don't worry about being embarrassed if your suspicions prove unfounded. Think instead about what could happen if you don't act.

Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? Injuries?

...and don't forget the direction of travel.

When describing suspects, notice their age, race, sex, height and weight. Compare your own weight and height with the suspects. Pick out some unique characteristics (scars, noses, jewelry, etc.) that may help you identify the suspect in the future.

WHAT IS SUSPICIOUS?

Basically, anything that seems even slightly "out of place" or that is occurring at an unusual time of day could be criminal activity.

SOME OF THE MOST OBVIOUS THINGS TO WATCH FOR AND INCLUDE:

- A stranger entering your neighbor's house when it is unoccupied.
- A scream could mean robbery or an assault in progress.
- Anyone removing accessories, license plates or gasoline from a car.
- Anyone peering into parked cars may be looking for valuables inside, or steal the vehicle.
- The sound of breaking glass or loud explosive noises could mean somebody is breaking into a house, vandalism, or a vehicle accident.
- A person around a neighborhood that you don't know may be a burglar.
- If someone is going door-to-door in your neighborhood, watch them for a while. If after a few houses are visited, one or more of the persons tries a door to see if it is locked or goes into a back or side yard, it could be a burglar. Such an action is even more suspicious if one person remains in the front when this occurs, or if there is a car following a few houses away. Call the police immediately and do not wait for the person to leave.

IF YOU ARE BURGLARIZED:

1. Do not enter your house if you return home and find exterior evidence that a burglary is taking place or has taken place. Go to a neighbor's home and call the police.
2. If you enter your home and find evidence of a burglary, call the police immediately. Do not touch anything or move anything around. Give the police a chance to gather evidence that may have been left.
3. Try to determine what has been taken, and prepare a list of stolen items (with serial numbers if possible) to assist police in their investigation.

WHEN YOU LEAVE HOME...FOR A SHORT TIME

If you are going shopping or out to dinner, keep these things in mind:

A residence which presents a lived in appearance is a deterrent to burglars. Leave a light on day and night.

Let a neighbor know your home will be unoccupied for a period of time. Leave a radio or television on in the house.

Don't leave notes on the door indicating that you are gone and will be back at a certain time.

Secure all windows and doors before leaving the residence.

Don't leave keys hidden outside in hiding places which are usually obvious to a burglar.

HERE ARE A FEW SIMPLE THINGS YOU SHOULD DO:

1. Lock your car...take the keys. A thief who is offered a few unguarded moments and a set of keys to your car, can hop in and drive off. Whenever you park, even for just a few moments, you should shut off the engine, remove the keys from the ignition, (taking them with you and lock the car doors before you leave. Remember, if you leave the engine running for your OWN convenience, you might as well be leaving the car door open to a thief.
2. Never leave valuables like packages, handbags, clothing or cellular phones lying inside the car (in plain view). Regardless of their value, a passing thief may be tempted to break-in and steal your property. Don't tempt a thief...chances are you'll lose.
3. Lock your valuables in the trunk before you leave your last parking spot and here is why. Assume a thief is looking on while you park your car. If you move your property to the trunk while he's watching, he only has to wait for the right moment or opportunity to break-in and steal from you. If your things mean enough to you to lock them in the trunk, they might be worth the risk he has to take to steal them. If you had locked them in the trunk before you left your last parking spot, you could get out, lock the car and walk away this time without attracting any unwanted attention.
4. Protect your car by parking in well-lighted and well-traveled areas. 24-hour parking lots with attendants on duty are a benefit to the vehicle owner. Avoid dark and deserted streets and alleys and other "abandoned" places.

When parking in a lot, take the claim ticket with you. If you have to leave your keys behind, take every key except the one that fits the ignition switch. If you have a garage, park your car inside and lock both the car and the garage.

5. Consider installing a car alarm. Once you activate the alarm you can leave your car unattended, but protected by noise. AN ALARM WON'T CATCH A THIEF, but somebody who forces open the door, the hood, or the trunk lid will set off the alarm and attract attention.

PERSONAL SAFETY AT HOME

Be sure that you secure your home adequately from intruders. You need to have solid core exterior doors with good dead bolt locks. A sturdy door frame is also needed. Special locks and techniques can also be used to secure windows.

Don't automatically open the door when someone knocks or rings the bell. Do not assume you know who is at the door, even if you are expecting company. Always look through a peephole or a window if accessible. You do not want to open your door to someone you do not know.

Require all callers to identify themselves. View a company identification through a peephole or window. Do not rely on chain locks. If someone identifies themselves as an employee with a utility company or a repairman, do not hesitate to verify his presence. Call the company and find out if they have sent someone out to your residence. If you live in an apartment complex, contact the apartment office to verify that a maintenance man has been sent to your apartment. Do not open the door unless you are satisfied who the person is.

Salesmen may come to your home from time to time. Once again, don't feel you are obligated to open your door. If you wish to talk to a salesman or solicitor, first make sure they have a Cobb County Solicitor's Permit. It is a picture identification which is issued by Cobb County Permits Section. If they do not have one, call the police. In addition, solicitors are not allowed to go to people's homes after dark.

If a person comes to your home and request to use your telephone, do not let them in. Take a telephone number and make the phone call yourself. Do not trust a person at your door just because she is a woman. Women are involved in crime also.

Instruct children not to give out any information about anything or anybody at your home. Never give out any personal information to a stranger at your door or on the phone.

If you move into a new apartment or house, the key cylinder or locks should be changed.

Try to do all outside chores, such as taking out the trash or feeding pets, before dark.

Do not list your name on a mailbox or in a telephone directory using your first name. You may want to add a "dummy" name to your mailbox to make people think you have a roommate.

When you are working outside in your yard, do not leave your door unlocked. Someone could enter your home while you are distracted.

If you receive harassing phone calls, report them to the police and to the phone company. Do not talk to the caller and quietly hang up.

If you ever return home and feel that your home has been burglarized, do not enter the residence. Go to another phone and call the police.

DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL POLICE.

CALL 9-1-1 FOR AN EMERGENCY.

PERSONAL SAFETY WHEN AWAY FROM HOME

Be aware of your surroundings and the people around you. Especially if you are out alone or out at night. If a certain place or person makes you feel uncomfortable, stay as far away as possible. **ALWAYS TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS!**

It is always good to have another person accompany you while out walking or late at night.

Avoid doorways, bushes and alleys where someone could hide.

Avoid dark streets, vacant lots, parks, and unpopulated areas. Do not take shortcuts.

Walk on the side of the street facing traffic, near the curb. This way you can see all approaching automobiles. If someone stops you to ask for directions, stay an arms distance away from the vehicle. This way you will not be pulled into the vehicle.

If you are harassed by the occupants of a car, turn around and walk the other way. If a vehicle continues to follow you, try to get a tag number and call the police.

If you feel you are being followed by a person on foot, cross the street and increase your pace. If you feel you are in real danger, run toward the nearest well-lighted business or house and scream as loud as you can.

Wear clothing (and shoes) that give you freedom of movement.

Remember, you should not talk to strangers. You do not have to be friendly to someone you do not know. If a person continues to bother you, (even when you are ignoring him) go to a place where other people are.

Never accept a ride from someone you do not know.

When using public transportation, wait in well-lighted areas. Try to travel with one or more companions. When waiting for a bus, stand near other people who are also waiting. If the bus is nearly empty, sit near the operator. When you exit the bus go to well lighted areas.

If you are followed into an elevator or if you become uncomfortable with the other passengers, pretend you have forgotten something and get off. If you are alone, stand near the control panel, and be prepared to push the emergency button.

Do not struggle with a purse snatcher. Release your purse rather than risk being knocked down, dragged or beaten. Property is not worth getting hurt over.

Carry or wear as few items of value as possible. **If your not willing to lose it, don't carry it.**

If you are at a shopping mall, and feel you are being followed, ask a salesclerk to contact the police or security.

PERSONAL SAFETY WHEN OUT IN THE CAR

Keep the vehicle doors locked at all times. It is best to keep the car windows rolled up. Be aware of people loitering in potential problem areas.

If you are at an intersection and someone tries to get into your vehicle horn.

Before starting a trip, make sure you have enough gas and that your vehicle is in sound mechanical condition.

Travel along routes that you are familiar with.

Park in well-lighted areas and always lock your car. Never get out of your car or approach it if a stranger is lurking nearby. Look in both the front and back seat of the vehicle before getting inside. Be prepared by having the car keys in hand.

Do not pickup a hitchhiker (of either sex.) If someone needs assistance, offer to call the police.

If you have car trouble, signal for help by raising the hood, turning on the emergency flashers, or by tying a white cloth to the antenna. Remain inside the car with doors locked and windows rolled up until identified help arrives. If someone stops to help, do not get out of your car. Roll down the window slightly and ask the person to call the police.

Do not let someone force or trick you into stopping your vehicle. Someone might point at your tire to make you think it is going flat. Or somebody might bump your vehicle from behind with their vehicle to get you to stop. **Remember, your safety is more important than your vehicle.** If you feel hesitant about stopping your vehicle, especially in an isolated area, drive on until you find a well-lighted area.

*Even a police officer is trained to understand that a person may drive until they find a well lighted and safe area to pull over.

Never leave your keys in the car whether at home or out. Many people leave their keys in their car when they go in to pay for gas. This is an open invitation for a car thief.

If you any other questions about the **Cobb County Police Department Community Education Unit** programs please call (770)499-4134.

VALUABLE PROPERTY RECORD

You SHOULD keep a record of your valuable items for insurance purposes. As you mark your items, list on the Property List the item description, serial number and your identification number. A copy of the list should be kept in a secure place. If your home is burglarized, you can then check your list for what items have been stolen and report these items to your insurance company and the police department.

Name: _____ (OPTIONAL)
Address: _____ City & State, Zip _____
Phone: () _____ IDENTIFICATION NUMBER _____

TELEVISION, VCR, STEREO, MICROWAVE, CAMERA, ELECTRONICS, ETC...

ITEM	MAKE	SERIAL NO.	COMPANY	ACCOUNT NO
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

JEWELRY, COINS, ANTIQUES, ETC...

ITEM AND DESCRIPTION	EST. VALUE	MARKINGS	YR PURCHASED
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

POWER TOOLS, SPECIAL EQUIPMENT, GUNS, ETC...

ITEM	MAKE	TYPE	CALIBER	SERIAL #
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____